

**Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Minutes-Mental Health Advisory Committee**

**Date:** May 16, 2006

**Location:** 4600 Valley Road, Classroom 416

**Interpreters:** Lorelei Waldron and Carla Engstrom

**Members Present**

Vickie Frizzell Pratt  
Melinda Brown

**Technical Advisors Present**

Vickie Campbell  
Cherie Roberts

**NCDHH Staff Present**

Tanya D. Wendel  
Peggy Williams  
Norman Weverka

**Gather, Welcome & Introductions**

Chairperson Vickie Frizzell Pratt called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introduction of members and guests followed.

**Approval of May 16, 2006 Minutes**

Minutes from the February 22, 2006 meeting were approved as read.

**Emergency Preparedness Update**

Ms. Williams gave an update on the Emergency Preparedness training for Nebraska. Ms. Williams indicated she had not heard from Glenna Cooper from C.S.D. in Tulsa. The advisory committee recommended that Ms. Wendel send Claude Stout with TDI a letter addressing our concerns about Ms. Cooper not responding to our requests for training. Ms. Williams passed out a handout on the Neb. Disaster Conference to the members; Ms. Pratt indicated she would like to attend this.

Discussion was held about adding a representative from NeRID to the committee. Ms. Williams will contact the President of NeRID about this recommendation.

The advisory committee talked about concerns regarding the upcoming Bird Flu epidemic. It was recommended that a sub committee be set up to discuss training for deaf and hard of hearing people about this issue. It was recommended that Jill Bird, Tanya Wendel, Vickie Pratt and Peggy Williams serve on the committee.

The committee also discussed whether or not TV stations would caption a State disaster and suggested that this issue be brought up to the Regions and the Statewide Disaster Committee. Ms. Williams will discuss this at the next Statewide Disaster Committee meeting.

### **Legislative Update**

Ms. Wendel reported that LB 87 had passed and was signed by the Governor on March 16, 2006. The Interpreter Licensure bill would require programs such as UNO, UNL, State Colleges, Police Departments and Courts to use licensed interpreters. Community Colleges are exempt from this legislation. This bill will require that interpreters working for the above-mentioned agencies will have to be licensed and registered with the Commission. Ms. Wendel stated this bill will begin June 30, 2007 and passed out copies of the bill. She indicated that there was a legislative change this year adding that CEU's be maintained by the Commission and she clarified that NCDHH is an approved sponsor of Rid-CMP (Certified Maintenance Program).

Ms. Wendel reported that the ASL bill was not out of committee and stated that the Neb. Department of Education has a working committee looking at this issue and considering ASL as a National Language. The Department of Education Board will be voting on this at their August meeting.

### **Child Protective Services Training Outline**

Ms. Williams and Ms. Brown are scheduled to present to various CPS workers across the state. The MHAC discussed areas to be outlined for this training:

- Treatment Plan
- Policy Review
- Language
- Communication Barriers (Deaf, hard of hearing, cochlear implants)
- Risks
- Family (no communication)
- Development age-Emotional Level
- Resources
- Assessments
- Foster parents/Surrogate parents
- Role of the Interpreter

### **Domestic Violence Brochure/Fact Sheet**

Discussion was held regarding developing a domestic violence brochure and fact sheet pertaining to the deaf and hard of hearing population. It was suggested to work with the Rape Spouse Abuse Center and link up with other partners to gather information.

### **BTNRH Mental Health Advisory Group**

Ms. Williams gave an update on the progress the BRNRH Mental Health Advisory committee is making on establishing a Residential Treatment Center for deaf and hard of hearing youth/adolescents in partnership with Alegant Health. More discussion will take place at the August meeting as plans are further developed.

### **Agency Updates**

Vickie Pratt – Ms. Pratt feels there needs to be better communication in the VR offices. She reported that there will be a new substance abuse evaluation for the courts. She indicated she will be moving her office soon to a new location but at this time was not sure when the

move/location would take place. She suggested for deaf awareness week to design a questionnaire for the deaf and hard of hearing on depression, substance abuse, anxiety disorders, etc.

Melinda Brown – School will be out soon and the kids are ready for summer.

Norm Weverka – The NCDHH Field Representatives are assisting people in understanding how to use VRI. Deaf Awareness week is the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in Sept. and any ideas/suggestions would be appreciated as well as ideas for Noise Exposure Week. The NCDHH staff will have a strategic planning meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss agency goals and objectives. He announced that Ms. Williams has been providing training on the new Medicare Part D changes to OAD and LAD.

Cherie Roberts – Retreat plans are underway for next year to include a fall outing for kids, art project with BTNRH, “Young Americans” in Grand Island in the spring as well as plans to have interpreter training with BTNRH.

### **New Business**

There was no new business discussed at this time.

### **Next Meeting**

The next MHAC meeting will be held in Omaha on August 15, 2006 in Omaha. The meeting will be held at the State Office Building, 1313 Farnam on the Mall, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor in conference room F.